

# State Supreme Court justice to deliver Whitman commencement address

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Washington Supreme Court Justice Mary Yu Courtesy photo

Washington State Supreme Court Justice Mary Yu will deliver the 2016 Whitman College Commencement address.

"I am honored to be part of this year's Commencement at Whitman College because it's an extraordinary, innovative institution of higher education with a social conscience," Yu was quoted in a college announcement this morning. "When I visited Whitman last year, I was impressed with the students' level of engagement and concern for social justice and racial equity."

Appointed by Gov. Jay Inslee, Yu joined the Supreme Court in 2014 after serving as a King County trial court judge for more than 14 years. Yu is the first Asian, the first woman of color, and the first member of the LGBT community to serve on the

Washington Supreme Court, the announcement stated.

"I am delighted that Justice Yu will be our speaker," Whitman College President Kathleen Murray said in the announcement. "She has a real passion for social justice that many of our own students share. She is a role model who is always looking for ways to best serve the most marginalized people in our communities."

Yu grew up in the south side of Chicago, raised by immigrant parents: her mother coming from Mexico and her father from China. She is the first in her family to graduate from college. After receiving her degree in theology from Dominican University, she began social justice work for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago.

As a King County judge, she heard a wide variety of criminal and civil cases and presided over hundreds of adoptions and other family law matters.